

UNIVERSITY OF TARTU

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

**A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE REPRESENTATION OF TEACHERS IN THE  
MEDIA IN ESTONIA AND IN THE UK ON THE EXAMPLE OF *EESTI PÄEVALEHT*  
AND THE *GUARDIAN***

MA thesis

KADRI VARULA

SUPERVISOR: ASSOC. PROF. RAILI MARLING

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## ABSTRACT

The teacher profession has always been contradictory. On one hand, teachers are those who help the new members of society to become independent and teach them how to cope with life. On the other hand, it is widely known that the teacher profession is not a prestigious one and the status of teachers is rather low. Teacher profession is notorious for its low income, heavy workload, long hours and misbehaving students. Since the news media is one of the biggest influencers of teachers' image in the eyes of the public, the study aims to find out whether teachers are represented in the social language of Caring or in the social language of Accountability in news articles of *Eesti Päevaleht* and the *Guardian* from January to October 2014.

The introduction outlines and discusses the problem of teachers' low status. It also describes the role of the media and discusses how news stories are made and why it is important to analyse the media. The literature review provides an overview of seven studies on teachers' representation in the media in Anglophone countries and in Estonia. The section dedicated to research methodology discusses the methodology used (structural analysis). The data analysis focuses on the recurring features that appear in the two newspapers when speaking about teachers within the eleven months studied. The conclusion summarises the main outcomes of the analysis and discusses their implications.

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## Introduction

The idea to study the representation of teachers in the news in Estonia and in the UK evolved from my personal interest in teachers' image while being a young member of the teachers' community as well as from the general opinion that the teaching profession is time and energy consuming and not rewarded enough. The position of teachers has always been contradictory. On one hand, it is widely acknowledged that teachers are important role models and mentors for children, the future of society. On the other hand, teachers receive constant criticism about their work and students' poor results and the discussions about teachers' salaries are never-ending. Even basic school pupils, whose ideas are generally influenced by parents, school, peers and the media, share the opinion that the teacher profession has a poor reputation. I personally have heard many comments by pupils after working a few months at school that teachers are definitely poor; the low income of teachers is probably the best-known fact about teaching that the students know. In addition, being a teacher is usually not considered a great career opportunity by pupils. The latter comes out well in the following example. An Estonian educational activist and a teacher Triin Toomesaar was once giving a lesson and discussed what one needs to do in order to cope well in life. At the end of the class when the pupils had left, she discovered a letter on the floor written from one pupil to another saying: "Naljakas õp. räägib, et elus seda vaja teist vaja ja siis ise on mingi kuradi õpetaja" ("This teacher is weird, saying that we need to do this and that in life but she is only some goddamned teacher"). The letter shows that the pupil thinks of teachers as hypocrites who want to put a heavy workload on children and make them achieve great goals although they themselves have failed because they have achieved nothing else in their lives than becoming teachers. Toomesaar (2014) claims, that while repairing the Estonian education system, one of the most important aspects that should be dealt with is improving the low status of teachers.

The advantages and disadvantages of the teacher profession as well as criticism of teachers' work are constantly present in the media, one of the shapers of teachers' image in today's society. For example, in Estonia, several articles have been published in popular daily newspapers within the past year that write about how teachers are content with their work but not satisfied with the low status and negative image of their profession e.g. "Eesti õpetajad on rahul oma tööga, kuid rahulolematud ameti staatusega". This is not an issue in Estonia alone. In the UK, as well articles with titles like "Workload hits teacher morale or Teacher crisis will not go away, NUT warns" frequently appear in newspapers. Some publications, similarly to educational political documents, even fail to describe and discuss the exact content of teachers' work and their image (Sepp et al 2014). For example, Sepp et al (2014) argue that the Basic School and Upper Secondary Schools Act lists the tasks of basic and upper secondary schools, compulsory school attendance, integration of different subjects, creating a good learning and teaching environment etc., but does not mention teachers as key figures in putting educational policies into actual practice. Sepp et al (2014) add that the teachers' image that the media has offered in Estonia for the past couple of years is anonymous and dual. On the one hand, there is an old, worn-out teacher who is not following new ideas and methods and not able to develop. Obviously, this kind of teacher receives a lot of criticism in the media. On the other hand, the "old" teacher is being contrasted with a young teacher stereotype, who is innovative, creative, ready to develop and child friendly.

According to the report by the Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) carried out in 2013 by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), Estonia is among the top five countries in the number of teachers who are mostly female and elderly. The research points out that the average age of Estonian teachers is 48 and 16% of teachers are over 60 years old. Another negative aspect is that Estonia only has 7.5% teachers under the age of 30, which does not provide enough rejuvenation to the aging teacher

pool. The number of young teachers has gone down in the last five years despite the government's attempts to improve the reputation of teaching and to direct young people to teach at schools (e.g. the programme Noored Kooli, which aims to direct young and capable people to work as teachers at school). The same report shows that the teachers in Great Britain are rather young, with 39 years for the average age of teachers, which is 9 years lower than in Estonia. Male teachers make up 15% of the teachers in Estonian schools, which is 1% less than five years ago. The gender situation in schools is considerably better in the UK where 36.8% of teachers are male. The research shows that generally Estonian and British teachers are satisfied with their work and schools but only a small number of teachers believe that the teacher profession is respected by the public. In Estonia only 13.7% of teachers believe that the teacher profession is highly valued in society. 35.4% of their UK counterparts find the same.

In addition to teachers' own perceptions about their profession, research on the media representation of teachers also shows the prevalence of negative topics in media coverage: heavy workload, not enough pay and teachers not valued enough. Different types of research carried out in different Anglophone countries show surprisingly similar results. Shine and O'Donoghue's (2013) study of representation of teachers in reporting on standardised testing in Australia revealed that teachers were represented as being under a lot of pressure, against institutional actions and not managing with their work requirements. What is more, the research shows that the decline in educational standards is widely attributed to poor teaching (Shine and O'Donoghue 2013: 390). A study by Goldstein (2011), which focussed on teachers' unions in the United States, showed that teachers' unions were mostly portrayed negatively, thus shedding a negative light on the teacher profession more generally. Since the media describes unionised teachers "anti-school reform" and "antichild", the media also strongly shapes the public's thinking about teachers (Goldstein 2011: 566). Teachers being

described negatively in the media is not only an Anglophone phenomenon. Research that has been carried out in Estonia shows the same. Moltsaar (2014) claims that the teachers in Estonian newspaper *Postimees* are mostly covered as passive agents who are not in power to affect their working conditions and income. Although some positive aspects about teaching make their way to the media, the majority of the articles published portray teachers negatively, which in turn understandably puts teachers into a very complex position. Also the majority of negative articles not only make matters worse for teachers but “influence public opinion regarding teacher quality and standards and views of public schools as being in crisis, creating moral panic” (Keogh and Garrick 2011: 419).

Media mediates reality but also shapes reality by choosing what to cover, what information to use and how to cover it. We are always dependent on news whether we want it or not. We cannot be everywhere to witness everything we are interested in and we need the help of the media that brings information to us. Mayr et al (2008: 73) claim that millions of things happen every day and although there are hundreds of thousands of them that were important, the newspaper only has a limited number of pages. Hence, we rely on the journalists to pick the news for us. After choosing the topics that will be covered in today`s paper, the journalist must also decide, which of them make it to the front page and which to leave towards the end (Hennoste 2008: 28). Hennoste (2008: 28) argues that the next step for the journalist is to determine on which character or part of news he/she should focus and which parts and characters should only be discussed briefly. Hence, the journalist has a row of decisions to make and even the tiniest of them can play a very important role in how today`s newspaper affects people. Mayr et al (2008: 62) have claimed that in order to fill people`s needs and provide accurate information, a journalist should act like he/she was the eyes and ears of the people. However, even in this attempt to achieve objectivity, the media inevitably has to make choices. The choices include the choice of the perspective and information to be

included (what facts or people are cited, etc.), but also the language in which the news text is written (Mayr et al 2008:62).

Because of its role as the mediator of reality, mass media is one of the biggest outside influences on people's opinions and acts. If certain topics are "fed" to the people, media makers prevent the audience from being informed about those topics that were left out although they could have been as newsworthy and interesting or even more important to the people. Thus, we must remember that the media is not the mirror of reality, but a selective representation of reality that depends on what is considered newsworthy. Hennoste (2008: 29) explains that there have been different criteria for newsworthiness: some say that it is entirely up to the journalist's intuitive feeling what and how to cover, others have said that certain newspapers rigorously regulate their standpoints about what to cover and how to do it. Nevertheless, newsmakers and researchers have agreed ever since the mid-1960s what the main criteria of newsworthiness are. Johan Galtung and Mari Ruge list twelve news factors. These factors serve as the criteria for choosing events that become news. The twelve factors include the frequency of the event; the threshold that the event has passed (e.g. the intensity of the event); unambiguity of the event; meaningfulness of the event to the target audience; consonance of the event – some information might already be known to the audience via previous coverage, which raises the news value; unexpectedness of the event; continuity of the event; composition of the news story; reference to elite nations; reference to elite people; reference to persons; reference to something negative (Galtung and Ruge 1965: 65 – 71).

Harcup and O'Neill (2001: 267) aimed to find out if any newsworthiness criteria had evolved after nearly 40 years and studied three national daily newspapers in the UK – the *Daily Telegraph*, *The Sun* and the *Daily Mail*. Differently from Galtung and Ruge (1965), who only studied foreign news, Harcup and O'Neill extended their study to all news and studied 1,276 articles in March 2003. In their study, too, the most evident of Galtung and

Ruge's news factors were unambiguity and reference to elite people. However, Harcup and O'Neill (2001: 274) realised that many of Galtung and Ruge's (1965) news factors have become questionable in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. They detected more criteria that were the basis of news selection in tabloids (*The Sun*, the *Daily Telegraph* and the *Daily Mail*), which were entertainment; reference to something positive; reference to elite organisations or institutions; agendas, promotions and campaigns. Harcup and O'Neill (2001: 278 – 279) also proposed a new list of news values, which include the power elite; celebrities; entertainment; surprise; bad news; good news; magnitude; relevance; follow-up and newspaper agenda.

In order to produce objective news stories, a journalist has to think of many aspects in addition to the news value. According to Mecher (1994: 38) an objective news story does not contain the journalist's opinions, feelings or ideas, it is based on actual facts and the journalist represents himself or herself as an independent and neutral spectator. Mecher (1994: 38) explains that stories are verifiable if they derive from some kind of evidence. Hennoste (2001: 138) has also said that news articles in general should be objective but linguistic manipulation is used in order to influence the readers' attitudes and behaviour. In fact, all texts manipulate with the reader even if the journalist has followed all the necessary steps and genuinely thinks that he/she is completely objective. Although all people are different and interpret the media according to their knowledge, experience and way of thinking, vocabulary and grammar position the reader in a certain way and they may be either consciously or unconsciously chosen by a journalist. Hennoste (2001: 138-139) suggests that the most common devices of manipulation are the selection of certain words and grammar. Language shapes the understanding of a text and thus also the opinion of the audience. Durant and Lambrou (2009: 29) argue that rhetorical devices in persuasive discourse include lexical choices, tropes (a word or a phrase used in a new and different way in order to create an artistic effect) or figurative language and sound patterning. The lexical choices that the writer makes direct the

reader to a certain understanding of the news story, while a closer analysis enables the reader to comprehend the goal of the utterance, author`s evident and hidden purposes and worldviews. Tropes often make the meaning of an utterance apparent and develop new understandings of it; sound patterning helps to link ideas and makes them memorable (Durant and Lambrou 2009: 29).

It is because of the power of the media in shaping people`s opinions that we need to carry out critical media analyses. Sociolinguist Allan Bell (1998: 3) has given four main reasons why scholars should be interested in media discourse: the media is a huge “ready-made” source of data for research and teaching; using media affects but also represents people`s language use and their opinion about it; media can describe social meanings and fixed ideas in society and the media mediate and affect the development and expression of culture, politics and social sphere. Bell (1998: 65) claims that in order to realise how language operates in society, it is essential to understand the news since they are the biggest corpus of language. What is more, analysing the media critically will enable us to compare news to actual conversations, editorials, columns and opinion pieces and similarly, different types of newspapers (Bell 1998: 65). Critical news analysis often proves that even the simplest news pieces are frequently more sophisticated than they look at the first glance and a certain opinion is presented although the text seemed objective at the beginning (Bell 1998: 65). What is more, critical news analysis is also a tool to discover how the news is made and knowing how something has been produced is always important to the consumer (Bell 1998: 65).

The media among other things also present us with stereotypes of teachers and the analysis of news stories enables us to comprehend what is behind news stories written about teachers. As it is known, not all people have equal access to media and this is also the case with teachers. Education and school related topics are often covered in daily national

newspapers and the authors are mainly not teachers. This leaves shaping public opinion about teachers and education into the hands of those, who are not connected to the everyday life of education and thus may leave the perspective of teaching professionals out of the shaping of public opinion (Cohen 2010: 106). Nowadays, the problem is not outright lying but that one party cannot contribute to the news and this results in one-sided coverage.

As mentioned above, we are all dependent on the media whether we like it or not. Media shapes our opinions, influences our worldview and behaviour. Since we trust the making of media into the hands of people we do not really know, it is crucial from time to time investigate how the media image is being produced and what the meaning behind the simple words that most people perceive is.

The aim of this thesis is to find out what social language is mainly used in the newspapers while speaking about teachers and how the identity of teachers has been constructed. The study proceeds from the understanding that the manner teachers are represented in the media affects the way teachers are perceived by the public and also influences teachers' self-esteem and general performance. The news articles that will be analysed derive from two different languages and two distinct cultural contexts. This will be taken into consideration in all stages of the study. Firstly, carrying out a comparable syntactic analysis in two languages is difficult due to differences in syntax. Still, within this study, the syntactic analysis primarily focuses on whether teachers are either active agents or passive objects in the news stories and this can be determined despite differences in syntax and can provide comparable data. Secondly, norms, values and educational systems of Estonia and the UK are different, but this is not the main issue in analysis. The aim of the present paper is to bring out the similarities and differences of teacher representation in the media of the two countries, where according to previous research the media has been contributing to the

negative perception of teachers. The focus here is on the media representation, not the comparison of school systems.

In order to achieve the aim, two corpora of news articles were collected, one from *Eesti Päevaleht* and the other from the *Guardian*. The period studied is January to October in 2014, which provided a sufficient number of articles relevant to the study to identify the main tendencies in the coverage. The articles were analysed to find the characteristics of the social languages of Accountability and Caring and to see which of them dominates and affects the image of teachers. The method is based on Jennifer Cohen`s (2010) study on teachers in the news in the United States. The present thesis tries to replicate the study by comparing the media representation in one Estonian and one British newspaper.

The research question of the thesis is:

What social languages are dominant in the news articles that represent teachers in *Eesti Päevaleht* and the *Guardian*?

The structure of the paper is as follows: the first chapter discusses the research on the media representation of teachers that has been done so far in Anglophone countries (the UK, the United States and Australia) as well as in Estonia. The studies will be contrasted and compared and the differences and similarities of data, methodologies and the results of the studies will be brought out.

The second chapter will outline the methodology of the thesis and describe the two social languages that will be the framework for the analysis. The rest of the chapter consists of the empirical part of the study, which will present the corpora from the two papers and discuss the results of the data analysis.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Teachers in the News**

Research of teacher representation in the news has been relatively limited (Shine and O`Donoghue 2013: 385). Hansen (2010: 335) even claims that there are many studies of the identity of teachers in literature and in films, but there have been only a few longitudinal studies that focus on the image of teachers in the news. The latter is endorsed by Shine and O`Donoghue (2013: 385), who argue that studies of the representation of teachers in the news are not particularly frequent and there is a notable lack of studies with a historical dimension that include data for more than just a couple of years and compare two time periods. However, according to Ulmer (2014: 2), the author of the latest study on the representation of teachers in the media incorporated into this paper, the number of studies about the representation of teachers in the mass media is increasing year by year. The situation in Estonia is not particularly better – I was able to find three studies that discuss the media coverage of teachers, all conducted in the past six years.

This chapter will discuss the research done so far in the United States of America, Great Britain and Australia and will also present the studies from Estonia. Seven studies from English-speaking countries and three studies from Estonia will be compared and contrasted. The work of Jennifer Cohen (2010) will be examined in greater detail towards the end of the chapter since the method of analysis of this thesis is inspired by her study.

### **Teachers in the News in English-speaking countries**

Search in the research databases available through the library of the University of Tartu yielded seven studies from Anglophone countries that will be discussed in this chapter.

None of the studies is older than nine years; the oldest is from the year 2007 and the newest was conducted in 2014. The main criteria for choosing these particular studies were the fact that they have studied teacher representation in newspapers and they have been published within past ten years. The studies analyse the situation in three countries: three in the USA, two in Great Britain and Australia. One of the two Australian studies was carried out by Shine and O`Donoghue (2013), who studied how teachers were represented in the media in the time period of 1997 – 2001, when one of the five major educational developments, transition to standardised testing, took place. Another study was conducted by Alhamdan, Al-Saadi, Baroutsis et al (2014) and it compared the media representation of teachers across five countries: the situation in Australia was compared to the situation in Saudi Arabia, Bangladesh, Oman and South Africa. This thesis is only interested in the study`s findings about Australian press. Alhamdan et al (2014) studied the period of seven months in the year of 2011 and 486 articles were examined. The American studies were compiled by Cohen (2010), Goldstein (2011) and Ulmer (2014). Cohen (2010) focussed on the time period of 2006 – 2007 and analysed the discourse on education in the process of the school reform Renaissance 2010, within the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) policy. Goldstein (2011) was interested in similar matters and examined how the public understanding of education was shaped by the political discourse around NCLB and other school reforms during the period of 2001 - 2008. Ulmer (2014) re-framed teacher evaluation discourse in the media in the light of NCLB and A Blueprint for Reform: The Reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. These policies emphasise how teachers should be improving the quality of their teaching through categorical inputs, which is mainly by teacher training, and their effectiveness through quantifiable performance outputs (Ulmer 2014: 2). The British studies include a comparative study of the representation of teachers just after the Education Reform Act in 1988 in the British press and literature that was published in the 1990s (Zemke 2007)

and a longitudinal study of the portrayal of teachers and education in the British press in 1991 - 2005 (Hansen 2008).

Shine and O`Donaghue (2013) studied 106 articles in the newspaper *The West Australian* between the years 1997 and 2001 that focussed on the introduction of standardised testing. *The West Australian* is a daily newspaper published since 1885, one of the oldest in Australia with the circulation of 160,000. The newspaper was chosen due to the fact that it is the only local metropolitan newspaper in Western Australia, has no competition and is a main source of news for 2.3 million people (Shine and O`Donaghue 2013: 386). The criterion for inclusion in the corpus was that the subject of the articles had to be standardised testing. Alhamdan et al (2014) studied another Australian newspaper, *The Australian*, with the circulation of 129,985 (in the year 2011). The main reason for the choice of this particular newspaper was its national coverage. It covers a wide range of topics – news about politics, government, business, the environment, society, education and sport; it is popular, available online and has a searchable database. Alhamdan et al (2014) studied 486 articles altogether from *The Australian*, which responded to the search term “teacher”.

The American researcher Goldstein (2011) collected and studied visual and textual media texts from the *New York Times* and *Time Magazine* over the period of eight years. After a careful exclusion of irrelevant articles, Goldstein (2011) studied 43 articles from the *New York Times*, 23 articles from *Time Magazine* and, respectively, 26 and 17 visual images. Ulmer (2014) performed a framing analysis in order to find out how the discourse of crisis had emerged after the publication of a set of articles about teacher evaluation data. Ulmer (2014) studied the implications of the article series called *Grading the Teachers* published in 2010 in the *Los Angeles Times*, then a set of subsequent articles in the *Los Angeles Times* in 2010, also a few articles on the same topic published in the *New York Times* and the *New York Post* in 2012, and *Wall Street Journal* in 2013.

The British researcher Hansen (2010) carried out a longitudinal study of newspaper headlines about teachers and education during the years 1991 – 2005. During the years 2003 – 2005, Hansen`s (2010) study examined articles from 17 national daily and Sunday newspapers and 5 regional newspapers. For the years 1991 – 2002, the corpus was restricted to only those seven newspapers that had a full online database. The aim of the study was to show what had changed during the time in teachers` image in the media by examining 5419 articles published in 15 years. The oldest study of the group is by Zemke (2007) who over the 1990s compared teacher representation in educational literature and British national press – the *Times*, *Independent*, *Guardian*, *Daily Mail*, *Mirror* and *Sun*.

This group of studies implemented different kinds of methods. Three of the studies used critical discourse analysis (CDA), although all authors combined it with other methods or made some modifications. Cohen`s (2010) analysis is critical in the way that it attends to “the ways discourse structures enact, confirm, legitimate, reproduce, or challenge relations of power and dominance in society” (van Dijk 2001: 353 quoted in Cohen 2010: 108). Goldstein (2011) combined critical discourse analysis with frame analysis, communication theory, critical media studies and visual analysis. In order to understand the process of framing teachers in the media, she studied images and discourses used in the media in connection with NCLB and how these images and discourses influenced the public to support NCLB. Hansen (2010) conducted a longitudinal corpus linguistic analysis and critical discourse analysis of the representation of teachers in newspaper headlines. Through CDA, it was possible to discover how the identity of teachers had been created through certain lexical and syntactic choices. Additionally, Hansen used a systematic computer-assisted analysis of certain linguistic patterns which occur in natural newspaper text, which together with the CDA gave a better understanding how the identity of teachers had appeared in media.

Shine and O`Donaghue (2013) and Zemke (2007) used grounded theory as their method of analysis. According to Andrews (2013), grounded theory makes it possible to develop a theory, which is grounded in data, and enables researchers to conceptualise social patterns and structures through continued comparison. Shine and O`Donaghue (2013) adopted modified grounded theory within an interpretivist paradigm. The paradigm emphasises the social meanings people attach to the world around them, and how they respond to them. In other words, the perspective to one thing is not always the same but can be changed as a result of experience. Shine and O`Donaghue (2013) were looking for the perspectives *The West Australian* had on teachers in its reporting on standardised testing. Zemke (2007) followed the example of Charmaz`s (2000) constructivist grounded theory method and modified it. Selections from the newspapers were coded and the codes were grouped into key themes, which were modified into core concepts step-by-step. The continua were applied to the concepts and later compared with the findings of teacher representation in the literature.

Alhamdan et al (2014) used an innovative technique of developing themes. In order to categorise all themes that emerged from newspaper articles about teachers, the authors used inductive and deductive processes to discover recurrent themes and thematic patterns. They identified four categories of teacher representation: as practitioners, professionals, role models and members of the community and society; and examined how teachers were represented in each newspaper within those themes.

Ulmer (2014) performed a framing analysis to see how a discourse of inadequacy has become evident with the publishing of teacher evaluation data. Ulmer (2014) examined the tone, placement, repetitions, analytical frames and supporting elements, as well as whose perspectives were included in media coverage of teachers.

Although the methods of analysis, the corpora, the periods of time and the countries where the studies have been carried out are different, they all reached some similar results. There is a lot of positive and truthful representation of teachers but still in the majority of cases teachers do not appear as active agents in the news stories and they receive a lot of criticism.

Alhamdan et al (2014: 496) identified four categories of teacher identity: practitioners, professionals, role models and transformative intellectuals and examined if teachers within these categories were represented as actual or ideal. Ideal teachers in Australian press according to Alhamdan et al (2014: 501) were generally seen as utterly honest, caring, focussed on students` needs and priorities, advancing students` fundamental values and motivation and were highly respected members of society whose work received constant appreciation. If generally the actual image of teachers nearly reached to the ideal, then within the categories of professionalism and role models, the media represented teachers in negative ways. Teachers` improper behaviour, misconduct, lack of dignity and initiative, and a call to sack teachers whose work ethics and results had not reached the minimum standards were the most frequent topics. What is more, the Australian newspaper opined that teachers lacked sincerity and labelled them as “cheaters”.

Shine and O`Donoghue (2013) examined how teachers were represented in the news in connection with the launch of standardised testing and although some praising articles were published, the overall picture was rather negative. The period of time (1997 – 2001) is characterised by the sense that students are failing and this is mainly due to the underperforming of teachers. What is more, teachers resist accountability measures that would alleviate the poor situation. Teachers are under a lot of pressure and they think that standardised testing would make the situation more difficult for both teachers and students and has no educational value. Teachers are even willing to undermine the process of

standardised testing when it is enforced. Although the study indicated that the teacher profession is associated with a heavy workload and immense pressure, the comments by representatives of different educational institutions generally shed negative light on the profession. The most frequently quoted politicians, bureaucrats and academics brought out the challenges that teachers face within their profession and also argued that teachers very often do not manage with their work requirements (Shine and O`Donaghue 2013: 394).

Goldstein (2011), who like Cohen (discussed below) analysed teacher representation within NCLB and other school reforms, focussed more on teachers` unions and claimed that within 66 articles that she analysed, teachers` unions were referred to positively in 4.5%, neutrally in 22.7%, negatively in 54.4% of the articles and 18.2% of the articles had mixed views about teachers` unions. The negative perception of teachers` unions transforms into a negative perception of teachers themselves (Goldstein 2011: 552-553). Her analysis shows that the media portrayed teachers as strongly opposing new policies like NCLB and both publications analysed went even as far as to suggest that new teachers would probably be better and not so strongly against innovations as the old ones are (Goldstein 2011: 559).

Ulmer (2014: 1) claimed that the metanarrative of crisis in education that evolved three decades ago continues to exist nowadays in the media and educational policy. Ulmer (2014: 3) explained how teacher evaluation data has been published in different newspapers since The *Los Angeles Times* published an investigative series of articles "Grading the Teachers" in 2010. The essence of the investigation was to see how much "value" a teacher had added to students over a school year and it was published in a database with individual teacher names. The "value" that a teacher had added was calculated via standardised tests that the students took at the beginning and at the end of school year after studying in the classroom of one particular teacher. The tendency continued and several articles about teacher evaluation have been published since then in the *Los Angeles Times*, the *New York Times*, the *New York*

*Post* and the *Wall Street Journal*, in which teachers were generally depicted as greatly sceptical of evaluation (Ulmer 2014: 4). What is more, in 2012, teachers were all given an opportunity to respond to their evaluation data online (Ulmer 2014: 5), which gave them a chance to speak out as well. Ulmer's (2014) findings fall in line with the results of Shine and O'Donoghue (2013) – teachers were not in favour of standardised testing and were sceptical of evaluation. Thus, Ulmer (2014: 9) suggested that teachers should take more initiative and use digital media platforms to make them heard. She even brought out the aspect that if more and more teachers made the effort, then soon it would be possible to speak about not only *teacher voice* but different *teacher voices*.

After conducting a longitudinal study of newspaper headlines in many British national and regional newspapers, Hansen (2010) concluded that the image of teachers in the newspapers changed from mainly negative to mainly positive within the years 1991 – 2005. Although there were many positive and supportive reports on teachers, misconduct by certain teachers remained a very frequently covered subject and lowered the good image of teachers (Hansen 2010: 345). Another study in the UK (Zemke 2007) aimed to find the similarities and differences in the representation of teachers in press and educational research literature. Zemke (2007: 44) claimed that the press used very extreme controversial characteristics while writing about teachers – teachers were depicted as good or bad, teachers' and government actions as functional or dysfunctional. Zemke's (2007: 48) analysis revealed that press recognised the changes in teachers less than literature, but emphasised the importance of teachers' responsibility for change.

This particular study has been inspired by the work of Cohen (2010) whose research will therefore be described in greater detail than that of the other scholars introduced above. Cohen (2010: 105) claims that the public discourse on education had been characterised by the message of crisis over the past decade in the United States as well in other Anglophone

countries like Canada, Australia and the UK. The main message in the discourse of crisis is that the teachers are not competent enough to “produce” capable workforce and grown-ups who could be responsible for the future of the society.

Cohen (2010: 107) studied how one of the biggest newspapers in Chicago situated teachers in relation to knowledge and authority about education. Her aim was to see what the discourse about teachers was when other people, besides those professionally connected to teaching, wrote about teachers and how they formed the public opinion. Cohen (2010: 107) decided to study the two-year period of 2006 to 2007, which was the time before and during the reauthorisation of NCLB policy and thus the period of more extensive media attention to education.

Cohen (2010) justified choosing the *Tribune* with the fact that out of the two daily newspapers in Chicago it has a bigger coverage and is thus next to TV and radio news one of the main sources for public information about educational issues. *Chicago Tribune* has ensured its position since it has at least two reporters who cover educational topics and who have been working for the paper for 10 or more years. Cohen (2010: 108) compiled a corpus of 107 news articles, deliberately leaving out opinion pieces from her corpus because her idea was to see how the image of teachers is mediated in supposedly objective news stories, not by in someone`s subjective opinion. Her inclusion of the articles was based on headline and keyword searches.

Cohen (2010) carried out a content analysis to determine the themes in news articles and then a structural analysis in order to find out what the continual grammar patterns that characterised the stories were. Cohen (2010: 109) focussed on syntactic, lexical, stylistic and rhetorical strategies while analysing the news stories and the strategies enabled her to discover in what social language the articles about teachers were written. Cohen (2010: 109) found two

social languages that characterised the majority of stories and called them the social language of Caring and the social language of Accountability. The analysis showed that these two social languages co-exist in the discourse of education in 2006 – 2007 but that three quarters of the news articles were written in the social language of Accountability and the educational policy in general was represented through the discourse of crisis (Cohen 2010: 109). This means that teachers were chiefly depicted as the objects of institutional actions, decisions and position. In other words, within this social language, the individuality of teachers was on the background and the institutional processes were on the foreground, which distances those who are most directly engaged with education from the decision making in the field (Cohen 2010: 110). Cohen`s study explicitly showed how the media uses different devices that the common reader pays no attention to for directing their understanding of education and teachers. Although a quarter of articles were written in the social language of Caring, the stories still remained framed by the language of Accountability that enforced the interpretation of teachers as lacking authority and knowledge.

### **Teachers in the News in Estonia**

Maiu Talja (2008) studied how Estonian teachers have been presented in the most popular Estonian newspaper, *Postimees*. The method of content analysis was used to study 226 articles about teachers in the time period 2005 - 2007. The main aim of the MA thesis was to find out what the prevalent tone of articles published about teachers was and what the main topics covered were. The analysis showed that articles with a negative tone dominated over the positive ones and during the three years studied, most attention was paid to the issues with teachers` salary and the problems with students` behaviour. News reporters and editors wrote most of the articles, and teachers themselves were very rarely the authors of articles

about education. Since teachers very seldom spoke up and emphasised the positive aspects of teaching or responded to the negative comments about them, the public did not receive a balanced picture of teachers' reputation either (Talja 2008: 2). On the infrequent occasions that a teacher's article was published, it did not appear in the main part of *Postimees*, but in the subsections of *Reflection* or *Opinion*. The results of the analysis proved the hypothesis that had been posed – the Estonian newspaper *Postimees* does not contribute to the positive image of teachers (Talja 2008: 3).

A year later, Kersti Kukk (2009) contrasted the representation of teachers' work in *Postimees* and in *Õpetajate Leht* during the year 2008. The target audience of *Õpetajate Leht* is teachers and teachers themselves very often get to have a word. Kukk's (2009: 5) main aim was to find out how the everyday work of teachers in Estonia was mediated, what was emphasised and how the findings combined with the Estonian professional standard of teachers. The thesis studied editorials only since, according to the author, editorials are more evaluative than news stories and analysing them will provide a better understanding about the identity ascribed to the teachers and how their work is valued (Kukk 2009: 13). 32 editorials from *Postimees* and 53 editorials from *Õpetajate Leht* were studied. The thesis used two methods of analysis – content analysis was used in order to get information about the general characteristics of teachers, teachers' tasks and roles and how teachers cope with the tasks and roles attributed to them. Additionally, qualitative analysis was used in order to give illustrative examples of texts from the corpus to accompany the results on content analysis. Kukk concluded that although the readerships of these two papers are very different, the results of the analysis were surprisingly similar (Kukk 2009: 54). According to both newspapers, the primary identity of teachers was that of the tutor and motivator of students; secondly, teachers were described as individuals with good subject knowledge (Kukk 2009: 57). Both papers gave more positive than negative judgements when evaluating teachers' ability to complete

the roles attributed to them. Although the majority of judgements were positive, many editorials in both newspapers emphasised the incompetence of teachers nowadays, and suggested that a teacher should be authoritative and competent (Kukk 2009: 59).

In 2014, Annabel Moltsaar carried out a longer and more in-depth study of teachers' image in the media than the previous two and analysed how teachers were represented in the headlines of *Postimees* and the *Times* during the years of 2008 – 2012. According to Moltsaar (2014: 7), headlines are the most prominent features of news that attract attention and inform the reader what the news story is about. Even if a newspaper reader is not interested in articles about teachers or education, he or she still skims through the headlines and will get some sort of an idea about what is going on in the field of education. Moltsaar (2014) aimed to find out primarily if teachers were represented in the media as active or passive participants in educational processes and what the common and different characteristics of teacher representation in *Postimees* and the *Times* were. Additionally, the thesis also concentrated on the lexical choices in the news stories that enable the readers to make certain associations with teachers. The previous two issues were compared in two newspapers and within the topics that were most common when writing about teachers. Moltsaar (2014) analysed two corpora of headlines of the electronic versions of *Postimees* and the *Times*. In the case of *Postimees*, 748 articles and in the case of the *Times*, 386 headlines were analysed. The method of analysis used was critical discourse analysis; certain elements like transitivity and lexical selection were studied. The analysis shows that both papers covered the topics of teachers' salary, confrontation and strikes most often. According to Moltsaar (2014: 54), the headlines in *Postimees* usually portrayed teachers as passive participants in the social events. During the five-year period studied, teachers mostly appeared in the news due to their low income and huge workload. It is clear that *Postimees*' "coverage reproduces the poor social status of teachers" (Moltsaar, 2014: 54). On the other hand, there were some positive signs from the

*Times*. In the UK newspaper, the prevalent topic was teacher confrontations and the teachers were represented equally as active and passive agents. The second most covered topic, teacher salary, showed even better results – in most cases teachers were represented as active participants. Moltsaar (2014: 54) observed that most of the articles in both newspapers had been written by those who do not work at school and thus there is a clear necessity for the teacher voice in the media. Teachers themselves should take action and submit more articles that reflect the real teacher experience and issues with it.

The three studies concerning teacher representation in the media carried out in Estonia all conclude that the representation of teachers in the media is not as favourable as it should be. All the studies have examined the newspaper *Postimees* as one of the most widely read and influential publication in this country. Two of the studies have compared *Postimees* with another newspaper – in the case of Kukk (2009) it was *Õpetajate Leht*, whose audience is mainly teachers and in the case of Moltsaar (2014) it was the *Times*, which is the second largest quality newspaper in the UK. Talja (2008) claims that the majority of articles written during the years 2005 – 2007 were negative in tone, which definitely did not help to create a positive image of teachers in the media. The topics mediated the most were teachers' salary and students' behaviour. Kukk's (2009) study presented a great number of positive judgements about teachers and their work, but nevertheless *Postimees* and *Õpetajate Leht* suggested that the majority of teachers are incompetent and lack authority. Moltsaar's (2014) work got similar results – Estonian newspaper *Postimees* continued the tendency and presented teachers as passive participants in educational and social events. The *Times* showed better results – teachers were represented equally as active or passive within some topics, but there were also topics where the active representation dominated. All three studies suggest that teachers themselves should take more initiative and contribute to the popular newspapers

in order to let the newspaper readers get information from those who are directly related to education.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### Methodology of the thesis

“Discourse” is a very broad concept and can be explained in many different ways. While linguists generally define “discourse” as verbal expression in speech or writing and the word has numerous definitions in the academic world, then the sociolinguist Gee (2003: 7) prefers to distinguish between discourse with “little d” and Discourse with “big D”. Discourse with “little d” refers to language in use, which determines activities and identities. On the other hand, Discourse with “big D” comes into being when discourse is combined with features that are not linguistic, such as physical premises, clothes, gestures, emotions and so on. If a person combines language with deeds, judgements, beliefs, things, symbols, physical items and physical places, and other people can identify him/her by those elements as a certain type of individual involved in a certain type of activity, then the person has created a Discourse (Gee 2003: 18). Gee (2003: 21-22) also adds that Discourses are never definitely definable; they can be divided into two or more Discourses; different Discourses can blend; the Discourses created many years ago are not exactly the same now; new Discourses appear and old ones die; Discourses are defined by other Discourses and hence they change when other Discourses change, emerge or die; Discourses can be hybrids of other Discourses and there is an immense number of Discourses since new ones can always appear and the boundaries are always challengeable.

Gee (2003: 23) also splits the concept “grammar” into two. Grammar one is the so-called regular grammar that is taught in schools. Grammar two emerges when grammatical units from grammar one are used to create patterns, which determine the characteristic *whos-doing-whats-within-Discourses*. Linguists call the grammar patterns “collocational patterns” – different grammatical resources that “co-locate” with each other. Gee (2003: 13) claims that

the grammar patterns we use, when we speak or write a certain language, help us to constitute an image of ourselves in certain situations. We also constitute an image of the activity we are involved with. Additionally, the grammar patterns evident in our utterances allow others to assign identities and activities to us. This means that other people form their opinions about us by the grammatical patterns we use while speaking. On the other hand, if others write about us, they control the image creation. The image of teachers in the news is entirely in the hands of the news reporters and editors. They decide what grammar patterns to use to convey the identity of teachers to everyone who reads the news stories. Gee (2003: 20) states that the grammar two patterns are not evident and easily discovered, they can be detected by critical analysis only. The analysis involves analysing “nouns and verbs, phrases and clauses creating patterns which signal or “index” characteristic whos-doing-whats-within-Discourses” (Gee, 2003: 29).

In order to explain *whos-doing-whats* in someone`s speech or writing, Gee (2003) uses the concept *social language*, which consists of different discourses people use in different situations for daily communication. For example, Gee (2003: 26-27) has given a very vivid example of how a young Anglo-American woman from upper-middle class uses two different social languages and the social languages are defined by the grammar patterns she uses. On the first occasion, she speaks to her parents over a dinner and uses formal language, which involves not stating her negative opinion directly, formal terms, formal sentence structure and explaining all the points. On the second occasion, she speaks about the same subject to her boyfriend and the language expresses solidarity. This time, she states her negative opinion straight away, uses colloquial terms, informal sentence structure and leaves some points to be inferred. With these two social languages, the young woman projects two different identities with two different aims for action. Gee (2003: 30) compares choosing different units of

grammar with choosing an outfit for a certain event. In both cases, one has an opportunity to show who he/she is and what he/she intends to do.

Gee (2003: 25) argues that all languages are constituted by numerous social languages that have their own style and variations. According to Gee (2003: 12; 25), the social languages are “different styles of languages we use to enact and recognise different identities in different settings” and “the role of languages in Discourses”. Some examples of the social languages that are present in different people`s speech or writing according to Gee (2003: 87 – 88) include deference, honour, school-based learning, reflection, attention to knowledge and claims, solidarity, informality, participatory communication, attention to shared values etc. The use of social language depends on the context. In order to subconsciously and consciously decide, which social language to use, we need to be aware of the particular context – what role we have, what we do, where we are and who we are talking or writing to. Cohen (2010: 109) believes that “Gee`s notion of social languages is a powerful interpretive tool for uncovering the ways in which grammar functions within a complex system of representation.”

This paper`s method of analysis follows the example of Cohen (2010) that is inspired by the ideas of James Paul Gee. This paper uses structural analysis to identify recurrent grammar features of news stories in two newspapers - *Eesti Päevaleht* and the *Guardian*. Cohen (2010) analysed the structure of news articles about education in order to find out how micro-level language patterns form the templates that make up the news. The templates formed are known to the newsreaders since they originate from shared cultural narratives. Cultural narratives are devices that help us to make sense of the world, they order and explain knowledge and experience and people frequently fit their problems and possible solutions into them (Gee 2003: 134). The templates themselves are formed by episodes from past events that found extensive coverage in the media and are now the context within which the newsreader

can make sense of the news (Kitzinger 2000: 61; 81). Although the templates are different in the Estonian and British media, the main aim of this paper is not to compare the templates as such but to analyse how the news produced in the two cultures use different social languages in representing teachers and thus shaping the opinions of the audience.

Gee (2003: 5) claims that there are numerous approaches of discourse analysis and none of them is definitive. Different methods suit different topics, situations and research aims but different methods may reach similar outcomes. Hence, the method used in the present thesis is not definitely the only one that could be used for analysing this type of data, but is one of the many possible methods, which has been proved to yield significant insights.

The main aim of this thesis is to find out, which social language dominates in the news stories that are written about teachers and how those social languages possibly affect the public image of teachers. Like Cohen`s, the analysis of this thesis characterises and contrasts two social languages: the social language of Accountability and the social language of Caring. Although there are definitely many other social languages present in the news articles speaking about education, Cohen (2014) found that the majority of educational news in *Chicago Tribune* were characterised by these two. Hence, this paper aims also to test Cohen`s method in Estonian and British context by looking for Caring and Accountability.

According to Cohen (2010: 110), the news stories written in the social language of Accountability are generally structured like reports and institutional authorities are repeatedly referred to. The social language of Accountability uses technical vocabulary, many statistical features like tallies, percentages, dates and grades. This social language only respects the knowledge that can be compared, presented and quantified in numbers. What is more, the grammar of Accountability usually positions institutions as the subjects of news stories. In addition, the choice of verbs that position teachers, students and even schools as the objects of institutional actions results in the marginalization of those who are directly connected to

education (teachers, students) and the state institutions have the sole authoritative knowledge and right to actions on education. The lexical choices of the social language of Accountability involve many technical words, which usually either measure, quantify, evaluate or mandate. In addition, the vocabulary includes many negative adjectives and is often connected to failure.

According to Cohen (2010: 112-113), the social language of Caring, on the other hand, clearly emphasises the importance of teachers' knowledge, their actions and their professionalism. The news stories written in the social language of Caring usually represent teachers as individuals, describe their professional development and their actions within schools. The grammar of the social language of Caring constructs the teacher's professional identity as relational (good relations between teachers and students are vital for successful teaching and studying), contextual (e.g. physical context of a classroom has been described) and historical (e.g. past has been recalled in order to emphasise progress). The social language of Caring uses many descriptive words, positive words are repeated and the news articles are narratives rather than reports. Often claims are made in direct quotes and teachers themselves or people close to them get to have a word, which in turn demonstrates the importance of individuals rather than institutions. What is more, many teacher profile stories involve anecdotes, stories within a story that are usually told by teachers or about teachers and they very often bring out the fact that teacher identity is constructed as relational, contextual and historical.

The presence of a certain mixture of grammar units suggests that a particular social language is being used. A critical analysis of grammar within a social language involves traditional dealing with parts of speech and lexicon, but also analysing how nouns, verbs, phrases and clauses act together and create patterns. Like Cohen, this paper also focuses on syntactic strategies, lexical strategies, stylistic strategies and rhetorical strategies. Syntactic

analysis involves having a closer look at the parts of a sentence and defining the form, function and relationship between them. Syntactic strategies signal the relative importance of various actors and practices. While analysing which words or agents are dominant in the article, which positive or negative words are used in conjunction with objects and subjects, it is possible to find if teachers are represented as objects or subjects in the news stories. Lexical analysis involves examining the author's choice of words in order to find out if the characteristic vocabulary of Accountability or Caring dominates. Lexical strategies signal contested ideological dimensions of language. In analysing the lexis, the main emphasis is on finding the particular positive or negative words and phrases that are repeated. Stylistic analysis involves looking for different stylistic devices like repetitions, metaphors, narration techniques, parallelisms, personifications, similes and rhetorical questions that create a certain impression of teachers. Stylistic strategies foreground or background social contexts – they either accentuate the context and make it clearer for the reader as in the case of social language of Caring or focus on the technical as with Accountability. Descriptive words and phrases that carry a positive meaning or connotation refer to the social language of Caring and on the contrary, negative words and phrases and technical vocabulary refer to the social language of Accountability. Finally, rhetorical analysis deals with credibility and ethics, the emotional appeal of the articles and convincing logic and facts. The question is how the purpose of text is brought to the audience and if the purpose is achieved. The news stories are studied to explicate whether they contain many statistical features like the stories in the social language of Accountability or direct quotes, individual opinions and anecdotes are used like in the case of the social language of Caring.

This method of analysis makes it possible to find out whether the news articles in *Eesti Päevaleht* and in the *Guardian* are written in the social language of Caring or in the social language of Accountability. After establishing the social languages of news articles, it is

possible to clarify whether teachers are represented as active or passive participants of education policy, whether state institutions control individuals and overall, how the news discourses of both papers situate teachers in relations of knowledge and authority within education.

## **Data analysis and discussion of results**

This paper studied *Eesti Päevaleht* from Estonia and the *Guardian* from the UK to find out how these two newspapers in two countries mediate teachers' image.

*Eesti Päevaleht* is one of the oldest daily newspapers in Estonia, dating back to 1905. The average monthly circulation of 21,900 in the year 2014 makes it the third-widest read daily newspaper after *Postimees* and *Õhtuleht* (Eesti Ajalehtede Liit). Since *Õhtuleht* is a tabloid, *Eesti Päevaleht* is the second most popular quality paper in Estonia and since it is widely read, the research results may suggest something about general attitudes in whole Estonia, although the paper will limit its discussion only to the studied corpus. The paper is divided into sections that cover some specific area of interest. Topics related to education tend to be covered in *Eesti* section, which is the main section of the newspaper. *Eesti Päevaleht* is available online and has a searchable online archive.

The *Guardian* is one of the most popular British national quality daily newspapers, dating back to 1821 (it was known as the *Manchester Guardian* until 1959). The circulation in January 2014 was 207,958, which placed the *Guardian* on to the tenth position in the list of national dailies in the UK. The quality papers that preceded the *Guardian* were *Daily Telegraph*, *The Times* and *Financial Times*. This makes the *Guardian* the fourth most read daily quality paper in the UK (The *Guardian*, 2014). The *Guardian* is available online and

also has a searchable online database. The present paper used the online archives of both newspapers for its analysis.

*Eesti Päevaleht* and the *Guardian* were chosen for comparison and contrast since firstly, they are both popular and read by a great number of people. Secondly, the world-views of *Eesti Päevaleht* and the *Guardian* do not collide, as both of them can be characterised as representing social liberalism. Although the circulation and the readership of the *Guardian* outnumber the ones of *Eesti Päevaleht* many times, the populations of the UK and Estonia also vary greatly. Both papers cover a variety of news and have an equal role in delivering national in international news in their countries.

Although in Estonia there is also a newspaper that is specifically directed to teachers and those who are interested in education more specifically – *Õpetajate Leht* – it has been deliberately left out of the study. *Õpetajate Leht* employs a certain number of journalists and editors, but active teachers write a great number of articles and opinion pieces as well. The aim of this study was to see how the image of teachers is reflected by those who are not directly connected to education themselves. What is more, *Õpetajate Leht* is generally only read by teachers, a “regular” person would hardly ever pick it up and thus the image created in that paper will not reach the wider public and influence the public opinion.

The corpus was compiled by doing a keyword and headline search in the online archives of the two newspapers, the “teacher” from the *Guardian* and “õpetaja” from *Eesti Päevaleht*. The time period under scrutiny was January 2014 – October 2014, which provided enough news articles to employ the methodology and get reliable results. Opinion pieces were deliberately left out since the aim was not to compare different people`s opinions but to see how supposedly objective news articles direct the public to form a certain image of teachers. The preliminary search in *Eesti Päevaleht* provided 182 articles that contained the keyword

“õpetaja” either in the headline or in the news article itself. Eliminating articles that were from *Arvamus (Opinion)* section and those that dealt with a completely different topic apart from education and mentioned a teacher only once (e.g. a retired teacher expresses his or her opinion about something irrelevant to education), the overall number of articles left for the study was 45. The preliminary search in the *Guardian* provided 222 articles in the main part of the newspaper and 757 articles in the subsection *Education*. After eliminating articles that mentioned a teacher in a different context, dealt with teachers or education abroad, spoke of nursery, tertiary or special interest teachers, spoke of head teachers or were opinion pieces, the number of articles left for the study in *The Guardian* was 122.

In the case of *Eesti Päevaleht*, the articles came from four subsections called *Eesti uudised Forte*, *LP* and *Sport* (*Eesti Päevaleht* does not have a separate subsection for educational news). *Eesti uudised*, which offers news about Estonia (e.g., “Linnade liit: riik on jätnud õpetajad lubatud palgatõusust ilma”), contained most of the articles that responded to the search. The other subsections *Forte* (deals with technical news, e.g. “Põnev uuring – kuidas õpetaja vaimne seisund laste käitumist mõjutab”), *LP* (Saturday paper of *Eesti Päevaleht*, e.g. “Kaie Kõrb: heaks õpetajaks ainult raamatut lugedes ei saa”) and *Sport* (“Kehaline kasvatus: higi ja aju”) contained just a couple of relevant articles each. In the case of the *Guardian*, the articles came from two subsections called *UK news* and *Education*. *UK news* mainly included articles that were directed to a broad audience, articles that everybody would be interested in and articles that shock (e.g. “Primary school pupils spiked teacher`s coffee with bathroom products”) and had almost no articles about teachers` work or other educational issues. The latter is the reason why *Education* section is incorporated into the paper although *Eesti Päevaleht* does not have a similar section. The subsection *Education* concentrated on educational and teaching articles (e.g. “Teachers` unions vote to strike in June”) and thus covers the major part of the corpus in the *Guardian*.

In the case of *Eesti Päevaleht*, the number of relevant articles stayed more or less on the same level within all months, with just two exceptions: June and October offered ten articles each, which is more than the rest of the months. Nothing particular happened in June to produce more news about teachers – all the articles were on varied topics. The reason for more articles in October was the school shooting in Viljandi that took place in the end of October 2014. In the case of the *Guardian*, the main part of the newspaper contained a balanced number of articles each month under scrutiny. The subsection *Education* had the most articles in April but the topics within the month vary, so the abundance of articles in April is not due to one particular event or topic.

After establishing the number of articles, the corpus was subdivided by topics in order to see if the social languages that the articles had been written in vary within different topics. Within each topic all articles were studied to see if they have the characteristics of the social language of Accountability (the articles have been written as reports, institutional authorities have been referred to, technical vocabulary and statistical features have been used, teachers have been positioned as objects, teachers have been referred to negatively and negative adjectives have been used in order to describe them) or the social language of Caring (teachers' knowledge, their actions and professionalism have been emphasised, teachers have been treated as individuals, the grammar that has been used in articles was relational, contextual and historical, the articles have been written as narratives and positive adjectives have been used in order to describe teachers, very often teachers get to express their opinion).

In the case of *Eesti Päevaleht*, there were five most prevalent topics – teachers' salary, behaviour and learning problems of students, school shooting in Viljandi, description of a teacher/teachers and general educational issues. The topic that gained a lot of interest in the *Guardian* and has been a popular topic in previous years' news media in Estonia - strike - received no coverage at all because no teachers' strikes took place in Estonia during the

studied period. In the case of the *Guardian*, the main part of the newspaper, *UK news*, dealt mostly with misconduct by teachers, school stabbing in Leeds, behavioural and learning problems of the pupils and other general educational topics. The subsection *Education* offered articles on the topics of pupils` behaviour and problems, teacher training and qualifications, teachers` salary, UK government`s Office for Standards in Education, Children`s Services and Skills reports (Ofsted reports), General Certificate of General Education tests (GCSE tests), misconduct by teachers, description of a teacher or teachers, strike and other articles concerning education in general. The biggest groups in both newspapers with 35.5% in *Eesti Päevaleht* and 29.5% in the *Guardian* are the mixed-topic groups. The discussion of the topics according to their proportional occurrence in following text involves the single topics groups only. Since this is a qualitative study, it does not aim to provide numerical data, nevertheless some percentages and numbers are used for illustrative purposes and better comprehension of the data.

Since the *Guardian* has a separate section for educational news, it is not surprising that it covers more topics. Although there were topics concerning teachers that only The *Guardian* covered, e.g. strike, teachers` misconduct, teachers` qualification and training, there were also four topics that were covered in both newspapers but in different proportions: descriptions of teachers, salary, violence against teachers, bad behaviour and underperformance. The analysis covers the topics that were present in both papers but also those that appeared only in the *Guardian*.

### **Description of a teacher/teachers**

One of the topics covered in both papers is the description of a teacher or teachers (e.g. “Why I`m trying to be a teaching assistant – by Cumbrian MP, John Woodcock” in the

*Guardian* or “Valgetähe teenetemärgi pälvinud Mai Jõevee: paremat tunnet ei saa olla kui lapsi õpetada” in *Eesti Päevaleht*). This topic is the most popular in the corpus in the *Guardian* (10.6%); in *Eesti Päevaleht* it is on the second most popular topic with 17.7%.

The articles that describe teachers in *Eesti Päevaleht* are published for different reasons: receiving a national Order of the White Star; being a victim of a fire; being a teacher of a minor subject; being a teacher of a brilliant pupil; being a young freshly starting teacher; being young and having achieved a lot as a teacher already. All of the above reasons can be interpreted as representing teachers in a positive light - teachers are represented as happy with their job, their good actions and results within the profession are brought out and they are portrayed as active members of the education field. Although one of the articles talks about a house fire, which itself is obviously negative, the language used to describe the teacher involved is positive and even the headline defines the teacher as a beloved teacher (“armastatud õpetaja”). All the articles published in *Eesti Päevaleht* are written by different journalists, which suggests that there is no journalist specialising in educational or teacher-related news in *Eesti Päevaleht*. Although teachers do not appear as sole authors of news within this topic, there is an article that is co-authored by teachers.

All of the articles in this topic group in *Eesti Päevaleht* also share the characteristics of the social language of Caring. They all emphasise teachers` actions, their working skills, knowledge and professionalism e.g. in “Valgetähe teenetemärgi pälvinud Mai Jõevee: paremat tunnet ei saa olla kui lapsi õpetada”. The teacher is described as a very enthusiastic worker, active in many different fields and she is represented as an individual. What is more, we can see the development of her professional identity as a short summary of her career is provided. Additionally, all articles about a teacher quote the teachers under observation quite often. All the articles are in descriptive style and teachers get to express their opinion. In addition to quoting teachers` opinions in different articles, there is also an article, which is co-

authored by three different teachers: “Viis päeva kasvavat ärevust: uued õpetajad astuvad oma klasside ette”. Three teachers describe their feelings and fears about their first meetings with their new classes. Here another characteristic of the social language of Caring is used: anecdotes are present in every teacher’s speech. Although the teachers who speak are only going to start their careers, they recall their school days, their teachers’ actions and extended descriptions emphasise the professional identity of teachers and their development through time. The analysis of articles in *Eesti Päevaleht* within the teacher description topic shows that they are written only in the social language of Caring.

In the *Guardian* we can see a pattern of social language similar to that of *Eesti Päevaleht*’s articles. The reasons for publishing descriptions of teachers in the *Guardian* differ from those in *Eesti Päevaleht* but they are all positive. The biggest difference with *Eesti Päevaleht* is that the *Guardian* features a series of articles called *How I became a teacher*, the authors of which are all active teachers describing what led them to become a teacher and the course of this path in their lives. This gives the readers an insight into teachers’ world that no television series can do.

All of the teacher description articles use a varied descriptive language and highlight teachers as individuals. Teachers’ professionalism and their actions within school and classroom are stressed, e.g. in “A lifetime in teaching: “I don’t think about retiring – what I do is who I am””, the teacher explains how he has never believed in punishment and how he has disciplined students with different methods. In “Enduring homophobic bullying at school led me to teach”, the author describes vividly how 75% of their school children had suffered from bullying in 2009 and an anti-homophobic bullying training manual was produced and led to a reduction in the bullying rate. While studying the lexis of the articles, it can be noticed that teachers, schools and students are presented as active agents, not objects of any institutions or institutional acts. All three appear in the articles in association with positive words, e.g.

*outstanding teachers, enthusiastic teachers, great teachers, qualified teachers.* All the articles written by active teachers outline the advantages and disadvantages of the teacher profession and although they all have to admit that teaching is not an easy job (it is very time consuming and challenging), the positive sides still outweigh the negatives. The words and phrases that are used to describe the advantages and the reasons for choosing the teacher profession include “the buzz of changing pupils` lives”, “teaching is challenging, but never boring”, “meaningful, purposeful and rewarding”, “a school is a fantastic place to work” and “teaching gives me energy”. These are all positive thoughts, which help to stress teachers` enthusiasm and commitment to their work. Some authors also mention that they had been prepared to hate the job when they started according to what they remembered from school and what the public reputation of teaching was at that moment. Nevertheless, all who had had their doubts at the beginning understood soon that teaching was the only career that could make them happy: it is rewarding because teachers can change lives, inspiring and means doing something significant.

All of the articles also contain anecdotes. All teachers mentioned in the articles recalled their time as students and compared it to the time now when they are teaching. Very many describe their first days in front of the class and how they felt about it. Some also outline their development and progress over the years, e.g. in “Teachers can be harder on themselves than they are on students”, the author and teacher Rebecca Ratcliffe admits that she used to shout a lot in order to assert herself when she started as a teacher but now she has changed her habits and feels that there are better ways to assert oneself than with shouting. In other words, even when the negative elements are mentioned in the anecdotes, the authors stress in the end how the mistakes led to the development of the teacher.

## Salary

Teachers' salary is the most widely covered topic in *Eesti Päevaleht* with 26.6% of the overall single topic articles concerning teachers. The same topic is covered considerably less in the *Guardian* (third place with 4.1% of the single topic article groups).

The topic of teachers' salary is covered in *Eesti Päevaleht* mainly for negative reasons e.g. teachers were deprived of their promised pay rise; teachers have to assess examination papers for a minimum pay; the government is using the money meant for teachers' pay rise for something else etc. and tends to be covered in the social language of Accountability. Still, there are also some articles that speak about the pay rise of teachers. One of the first things that can be noticed when looking at the articles that speak about teachers' salary is their structure, which resembles a report rather than a narrative because of specific information and evidence. The information is presented in a clearly structured format, not many descriptive words are used. When analysing the articles, it becomes evident that the government, local governments, Ministry of Education, schools and teachers are the main agents in these articles. The analysis of the words and phrases that fill the function of the agents, e.g. "õpetajate ametikohtade vähendamine", "tüüpõpetaja on vanem ja alamakstud", shows that in all the articles teachers are represented as the objects of national government's or local governments' decisions and actions. For example, the sentence "tüüpõpetaja on vanem ja alamakstud" puts the teacher into the grammatical position of the subject but complements the word 'teacher' with 'typical', that is, the teacher is not an individual but a member of a mass of teachers and does not act, because the sentence stresses a state of affairs. In the phrase "õpetajate ametikohtade vähendamine" the action of reducing teachers' salaries is compressed into a nominalised phrase that stresses the lack of agency of teachers in the process (and the actual agent in the process remains hidden because a nominalised phrase is used, instead of an

active sentence). In fact, teachers most frequently appear as complements to some other noun, mostly to the word “salary” (“õpetajate palk”).

The institutions and their representatives themselves figure as the subjects in the news stories, which is easily recognisable with expressions like “ministeerium eraldas kutsekoolidele täiendavat raha”, “Jaak Aaviksoo pakkus välja õpetajate palkade avalikustamise”, “õpetajate palgatõus oleneb sellest rahast, mida riik kohalikule omavalitusele jagab”, “riik on jätnud õpetajad ilma lubatud palgatõusust”. The institutions are agentive and perform actions that affect passive teachers. Another agent in the articles is the teachers’ salary (“õpetaja palk on vähenenud”, “õpetajate palk peaks sellel aastal tõusma”, “miinimumpalk sel aastal on 800 eurot”), which also very often can be associated with negative verbs and adjectives, e.g. “miinimumpalk”, “kõige madalaimaid palku”, “õpetaja keskmine kuupalk vähem kui võimaldanuks riigi toetus”, etc. The most prevalent adjectives are ‘low’ and ‘minimum’. Other sentences stress deficits that either make the improvement of salaries impossible (e.g., “õpetajate palkade tõstmiseks riigi rahast ei piisa”) or move it to the future but suggest a certain scepticism about the matter (“palk pidi tõusma uuest aastast”).

As it is appropriate for the social language of Accountability and as salary consists of numbers, all articles concerning teachers’ salary are full of numerical data. Teachers’ salary and its rise are brought out in numbers and percentages, the budget for the teachers’ salary and the amounts of money that the government or the local governments have allocated for teachers’ salaries are mentioned frequently (“800-eurone õpetajate miinimumpalk”; “20 protsenti lisatasudeks”; haridustoetuste kogumaht 205,9 miljonit eurot). The articles also compare different years and the number of pupils in the classroom as what the number of teachers employed and their salaries depend on.

In the *Guardian* the topic of teachers' salaries is the third most popular topic and the main reasons for covering it are a possible pay rise, teachers being denied a pay rise and that teachers' pay curb hinders recruitment. The articles are generally characterised by the social language of Accountability. As in *Eesti Päevaleht*, the articles concerning teachers' salary in the *Guardian* resemble reports rather than narratives. The main reason for that is probably the fact that they all are written according to certain national or local governments' reports published previously, e.g. YouGov poll, Policy Exchange report, Ministry of Education reports, Association of School and College Leaders reports. Numerical data, which is another characteristic feature of the social language of Accountability, is evident in all articles. The numbers usually refer to teachers' annual salary, comparison of the salaries in different regions and schools in the UK, comparison of the salary situation in different years, the hours of teachers' work, percentages of the pay rise or pay fall ("basic starting salaries of £21,600 to £27,00"; "earning up to £70,000 a year"; "a minimum 1% pay rise"). What is more, the vocabulary that is used within these articles is technical. Expressions like "the pay has fallen by 12%" use numerical data along with passive voice thus not identifying the person or institution that has lowered the salary. Words with negative connotations are frequent. E.g., "below inflation", "would worsen pay", "warning from the pay taskforce", "gap between pay of teachers and other graduates".

It also needs to be brought out that all the articles include quotes from different institutions or representatives of institutions (e.g. a Department of Education spokesperson, head of education at Policy Exchange) but no quotes by active teachers. The quotations usually concern the decisions and acts by the institutions in charge of teachers' salary, which suggests that national and local institutions have the sole knowledge of and authority over teachers' salaries and teachers are merely their passive objects. Although sometimes teachers, schools and head teachers appear as the main agents in the article together with educational

institutions and the representatives of different institutions (an example is provided below), it becomes clear after a syntactic analysis that the first group (teachers, schools, head teachers) appear primarily as objects of institutional actions and decisions, e.g., a Department of Education spokesman or Education Secretary: “Our performance-related pay reforms are designed so that good teachers get paid more”, “move by Michael Gove could swamp teachers with routine tasks”. Some sentences do not refer to teachers as persons but rather stress the profession of teaching and its attractiveness on the labour market (e.g., “the government will need to look closely at how it ensures teaching remains an attractive profession”). Again, in one of the articles “Teachers` denied pay rises for not volunteering to do school clubs”, Passive Voice is used without mentioning the agent who is denying pay rises to them. Nevertheless, in a few stories teachers appear as agents as well. For example, the article “Teachers` pay could rise to £70K”, which discusses performance based pay rise for teachers, presents teachers as the main agents several times, (“The best-performing teachers could earn higher wages”). However, in this particular article not every teacher gets to be the active agent but only those that have received good results, either great test scores by students or good Ofsted evaluation results, in other words, the teachers who have been evaluated according to the social language of Accountability. In addition, none of the news articles includes teachers` opinions or suggestions about their salary.

The verbs and adjectives associated with teachers, schools and head teachers are negative in their connotations or position teachers as objects. E.g. “George Osborne to announce plan to tackle school skills shortage” shows how a higher political force has to interfere in order to deal with the shortages that a school has. Teachers are not mentioned at all; only their skills are mentioned and this is too only in connection of lack. The expression “teachers should be treated like professionals” by Jonathan Simons, head of education at Policy Exchange, indicates that the teachers are not treated as professionals and although the

recommendation by him is positive, it still appears as the social language of Accountability since a representative of an institution comments on the status of teachers. Jon Richards, head of education at public sector union Unison, writes about “teachers washed away in the flood of administration and bureaucracy”. Here again, a person not directly connected to everyday school work speaks on behalf of teachers who not only remain voiceless but also represented as powerless to deal with the institutional pressure that is described like a natural disaster. Christine Bowler, general secretary of the National Union of Teachers, provides statistical data about young teachers: “Two out of five teachers leave in the first five years, given the intolerable pressures on teachers”. The statement undoubtedly emphasises the disadvantages and difficulty of the teaching profession in a categorical language. It also does not treat teachers as individuals but rather as a faceless statistical group.

### **Violence against teachers**

Both *Eesti Päevaleht* and the *Guardian* covered a tragic event during the time period studied. The *Guardian* published a series of articles about Ann Maguire, a long-serving and loved Spanish teacher, who was lethally stabbed in her classroom by a 15-year-old student in April 2014. This kind of a tragedy has happened before in the history of the British school system but this was the first murder of a teacher at school over 18 years. *Eesti Päevaleht* covered a series of articles about Ene Sarap, a cherished German teacher, who was brutally shot dead during a lesson in her classroom in Viljandi by a 15-year-old school boy. Estonia had not experienced a crime of this kind before and it was a shock for the whole nation. The large number of texts (13.3% in *Eesti Päevaleht* and 5.7% in the *Guardian*) is actually derived from these two incidents. The topic was on the fifth place in the *Guardian* and on the third

place in *Eesti Päevaleht*. Both the *Guardian* and *Eesti Päevaleht* covered the topic in the main part of the newspaper.

Although each article concentrates on a different or an updated aspect of the topic (e.g. an announcement of the event, general risks for teachers at work, a possible culprit arrested, a mass held for the teacher who had died), they all still involve either this particular teacher or teachers generally. In the *Guardian*, the tone of the articles is extreme remorse and they all are written in the social language of Caring. Firstly, all of the articles are written as narratives, all of them describe the event either in detail or just to give some background information about it. Descriptions of the school, classrooms and the surroundings of the school enable the readers to visualise them and emphasise the physical context in the grammar of Caring (one of the pupils: “I was in the science lab doing some science work and I just heard everyone screaming and running about and then we just got told to stay there”). In addition to physical context, historical context is brought out as well. It is mentioned several times that Ann Maguire was one of the longest-serving teachers with 40 years of experience and had taught generations of students. Descriptive language is used in the article to describe the event in detail together with the thoughts of those that were present during the stabbing or were just nearby, the mass held for Maguire and the participants are described.

Descriptive language appears also in claims made about Ann Maguire as a teacher. Maguire’s colleagues, pupils, former students, friends, family and parents of the school children describe the teacher. Their opinions are presented in direct quotes, which along with the descriptive language patterns define the professional identity of the teacher as caring, communicative, with good personal skills necessary for a teacher. The relational context evolves when the relations between the teacher and pupils are described and all articles acknowledge the good relations between them and the stabbed teacher. The claims made about Maguire by different people include innumerable positive words like “a mother figure”,

“amazing teacher”, “a friend to all of us”, “she was spot on”, “you couldn’t ask for a better teacher”, “a lovely woman”, “strict but in a good way”, “a brilliant teacher”. These phrases stress Maguire’s professional identity as a teacher but also her personal identity as a friend and mother figure. In addition to these personal quotes, each article also published several quotes by the representatives of different institutions (e.g. David Cameron’s official spokesman, Leeds District Commander, the Labour MP for Leeds central, general secretary of the National Union of Teachers) but within this topic, the institutional quotes are also in the social language of Caring and the killed teacher as an individual is the focal point here as well. All representatives of different institutions either give information about the event or guidelines for how to proceed with school life, express regret that this lamentable tragedy has happened, describe the stabbed teacher or generally the teacher profession in a positive way.

Estonia was in a shock after hearing news about a shot teacher in Viljandi in October and *Eesti Päevaleht* published a series of articles about the proceedings after the tragedy. The articles about Ene Sarap are, similarly to the *Guardian*’s coverage of the tragedy in the UK, characterised by the social language of Caring. The articles are written in the format of narrative and they convey the professional identity of the teacher as relational and historical. The relational aspect of the teacher’s professional identity unfolds when the students describe the good relations between her and them. Claims by an ex-student are published in direct quotes saying that Sarap was the most supportive person at school and she had helped the students to maintain good relations with other teachers as well. Sarap’s colleague also says that Sarap had been a very creative and good pedagogue, her claims are also published in direct quotes: “Ta oli hing ja eestvedaja. Tema peale võisid kindel olla” (“She was a soul and an initiator. You could count on her”). Herewith, the teacher professional identity is expressed in relation to positive personal qualities and professional skills that have made an immense difference in students’ lives and school’s functioning. One of the articles also brings out the

historical aspect of the teacher`s professional identity – Ene Sarap`s career was outlined and her professional development indexed. In other words, Sarap is not just a teacher, but also an individualised person. Another aspect that is worth mentioning here is the claim by the shooter that allegedly the relationship between him and Sarap had not been good. None of the articles published details about their poor relationship and according to *Eesti Päevaleht* the support system at school (psychologist and social pedagogue) had received no information about any problems.

### **Bad behaviour and underperformance of students**

Students` negative behaviour, poor classroom discipline and bullying are problems that are familiar to any teacher. Both experienced senior teachers and young teacher face behavioural problems and students` underperformance in their everyday work. Both newspapers included in this study have published some articles on the subject. In *Eesti Päevaleht* the topic is the fourth most popular and in the *Guardian* the topic is slightly less popular, on the eighth place in the corpus (with 6.6% in *Eesti Päevaleht* and 3.4% in the *Guardian*). The main reasons for covering this topic in *Eesti Päevaleht* are bullying at school, pupils failing the national exams and in the *Guardian* students threatening teachers or misbehaving towards teachers and bullying.

In *Eesti Päevaleht*, both social languages can be found within this topic and also within single articles. The article “Iga viies õpilane kannatab pideva koolikiusamise all” is a good example of both social languages. Firstly, some parts of the article are written in a narrative style with a varied descriptive language, but some of its parts (paragraphs that consist of statistical features with no descriptive language) resemble a report. Since it does not deal with one bullying case only but with the problem in general, it uses different statistical

features, e.g. the percentage of pupils in Estonia who are bullied compared to the percentage in our neighbouring countries, the number of countries where the KiVa school programme (a research-based anti-bullying programme founded in Finland) is applied etc. to give an overview of the problem and its possible solutions in Estonia and elsewhere. The statistical features are based on different reports and studies that have been carried out in Estonia and elsewhere. The social language of Accountability is strengthened by comments by a representative of SA Kiusamise Vastu (an organisation that deals with issue of bullying in schools but whose members are not active in everyday school life). Although the purpose of this organisation is to care and ease any bad situations, the representative still uses Accountability by mainly outlining the problem and giving the statistical side of the problem with no descriptions of bullying or problem solving cases.

In another article that deals with a great number of students failing a mathematics exam, some more characteristic features of the social language of Accountability are apparent. Again, different statistical features are used, e.g. percentages of how many students failed, what the general percentage of failures usually is, numbers of how many students managed to get a positive mark, the percentage of students who got a positive result in other exams etc. Also, negative and expressive vocabulary that is connected to failure e.g. “kukkus läbi”, “põrusid”, “massiline kahtede rodu”, “probleem õpetajaga”, “kehv tulemus” appear throughout the article. Negative words and phrases are not merely present in the article but they are also directed to the teachers. The parents, students and the head teacher involved in the article all agree that the main reason why such a great number of students fail an exam was the poor performance of the teacher. The teacher is described as a possible alcoholic, not coping with his job, not assertive enough to manage the class and not knowing how to teach. The head teacher is similarly accused by the parents of not noticing the problem even after several complaints from the parents and not hiring a new competent teacher. Although the

head teacher has been given a chance to explain and justify his decisions and actions, the teacher has refused to provide any comments and has not taken the opportunity to give his side of the story to the public. In addition to the lack of the teacher`s voice,

What is more, the article contains lengthy comments by a representative of Innove (a national foundation that coordinates lifelong learning development activities and implements relevant projects and the EU structural aid). Here, the representative emphasises institutional authority by describing the new requirements for curricula and examinations and the annual changes in the math exam. The representative of Innove also puts the blame for failing on the schools and teachers rather than the institution that has changed the requirements.

Although the majority of the language used in these articles is that of Accountability, there are still some traces of Caring present. In the article “Iga viies õpilane kannatab pideva koolikiusamise all”, the social language of Caring is evident when verbalising the claims of a teacher who is in direct contact with school bullying every day. Veronika Koppel, a social pedagogue, states that the results of a poll about bullying at school are true. Thus, a teacher is voiced and her voice lends credibility to the statistics. Some of the claims are presented in direct quotes, which emphasise the teacher`s actions, knowledge and professionalism and are also characteristic to the social language of Caring, e.g., “oluline on julgeda kiusamist tunnistada ja ennetada” or “usk, et õpetaja saab midagi ära teha, on väga oluline”. By these, the teacher acknowledges the fact that teachers can play a positive and active role in creating a better school environment, which brings out the caring aspects of teachers` professionalism. The second quote shows how important the belief of children in teachers is. The teacher also stresses the experience of the teachers in recognising bullying and not accusing pupils unfairly (“Kiusamise all peetakse ikkagi silmas tahtlikkust ja korduvust”).

In the *Guardian* the social language of Accountability is similarly dominant, although the stories are no longer just about students' and teachers' failures in academic activities, but also violence against teachers. Two articles describe pupils' intentional plans to harm their teachers. One of them speaks about two teenage girls allegedly carrying a knife in their schoolbags with the intention to murder their teacher and the second one describes how primary school pupils spiked their teacher's coffee with "bathroom products". Both articles appeared very shortly after the stabbing of Ann Maguire when elevated attention was paid to any suspicious behaviour and nobody was harmed. The grammar used in the articles positions teachers as objects of the misbehaving pupils. Teachers were not only threatened, but they were also not able to or did not have enough skills to do anything to prevent these situations. Neither of the teachers has been given a chance or wanted a chance to express their opinion about what had happened and explain the behaviour of pupils. Still, it is mentioned that neither of them wanted to press charges against the pupils.

Another article within this topic, "A school of bullies is no place to get an education", which addresses the behavioural problems of school staff as well as the pupils, is a good example of the social language of Accountability. Firstly, the school is described negatively as having "an atmosphere of fear and oppression". Negative expressions like "outrageous bullying", "conflict among staff" are used to describe the situation in one of the schools in Orkney. The grammar of Accountability is stressed by the use of negative statistical features: that only 33% of Scottish teachers would recommend a teaching career and only 12% think that the workload of teachers is normal. Again, an institution that is not directly connected to the everyday life of education is involved - the article includes claims by the Orkney Island Council that investigates the school's activity and the problems among staff and students. The latter shows that the school, head teacher and teachers are not able to manage their problems on their own but an authority force has to intervene to find solutions.

Although the majority of the articles on the topics are written in the social language of Accountability, there are still some features of Caring present as well. For example, one of the teachers, a target of the misbehaving pupils, is described as very popular among the staff as well as the pupils. In addition, another article, “Given a chance, schoolchildren won’t always behave badly”, includes several features of the social language of Caring. Firstly, the article outlines the biggest behaviour problems and classroom disruption in the UK but the language is supportive of teachers, e.g. the author does not put the whole responsibility on teachers but also asks: “What is the government doing to support teachers dealing with a range of abilities, ballooning class sizes and longer hours?” Although the government has been given an active role in the sentence, the author of the article acknowledges the hard work teachers do and the difficulties they need to cope with. She is convinced that the teachers need to continuously take notice of behavioural problems and cooperate with parents but they also need a great deal of support of their head teachers and higher institutions. The author continues supporting teachers by arguing that accusations do not lead to better behaviour.

### **Other topics and characteristic features**

This section is dedicated to articles that did not fit under any of the previous categories. The group of “other articles” constitutes 35.5% in *Eesti Päevaleht* and 29.5% in the *Guardian* of the whole corpus. The topics of this group from both papers are, for example, how elite schools need to reduce the number of speciality subjects and small group classes; the Ministry of Education recognising best educational workers; school system needs to adapt to the decreasing number of students; heavy workload of primary school teachers; teachers’ life inside what is called the exam factory; state schools failing to give students a moral compass etc.

The analysis of this group of articles in *Eesti Päevaleht* shows that half of the articles are written in the social language of Accountability, 25% of the articles are written in the social language of Caring and 25% of the articles have traces of both social languages. A good example of the social language of Accountability is “Jevgeni Ossinivski: koolisüsteem peab laste arvu vähenemisega kohanema”, which is based on the claims of the Estonian Minister of Education. Firstly, the article reports the situation of primary and secondary schools in Estonia before the beginning of the 2014/2015 school year. Throughout the article, teachers, schools, students, local governments and organisations that either administer or check the educational processes are represented. Nevertheless, while analysing the syntax, it can be seen that they are presented differently. The words and expressions associated with schools, students and teachers e.g. “tühjenevad koolid”, “kukub eksamil läbi”, “palju koole sulgeda”, “otsustatakse õpetaja palga üle”, are negative in their connotations and position them as the objects of evaluation and institutional acts. This can also be seen already in the title that speaks about the school system, rather than the people who make up that system and make it function.

The article also includes a lot of statistical data: it mentions the number of children born in different years, the number of gymnasiums that operate in Estonia; the percentage of subjects in Estonian in Russian schools; the number of students in different schools. Ossinovski also discusses the number of students a gymnasium should have to stay open, the percentage of students who have failed an exam etc. What is more, after analysing the lexis, it can be said that the vocabulary used in the article is related to evaluation, failure and measurement, that is, the social language of Accountability. The evaluation aspect can be seen for example in how a group of experts analyses how Russian schools have managed the changeover to Estonian in their studies (“vaatlustulemused näitavad, et mõnes vene koolis ei oska õpetajad eesti keelt”). Failure appears in the representation of extreme tension in the

operation of reformatory schools where, according to Ossinovski, relationship between the management and ex-workers is poor. The Minister says that in many schools, the situation is bad and the outcomes are not up to the standards, there are problems with the school network in general and the quality of school administration is poor. The repetition of the vocabulary of failure and evaluation, with statistical features and report like structure indicates the prevalence of the social language of Accountability.

In the *Guardian*, in the mixed topic group, the percentages are slightly different. What is similar is that the majority of articles are written in the social language of Accountability (49%); the proportion of Caring in the *Guardian* is 16% and mixed social languages are used in 35% of the articles. A good example of the social language of Caring appears in the article “The importance of trusting, caring and supportive relationships in education”. The article speaks about Everton Free School, which is using an alternative way of teaching, the power of football, with students who have been expelled from mainstream schools due to behavioural problems. Firstly, the article outlines the background of the issue and uses a great variety of descriptive language to convey the message – it describes the students` situation previously and it creates the mood of caring environment by letting the reader know that the teachers are listening and supporting the students no matter what. Although an outside agent, Edge Hill University, that conducted a study to see how students are coping in the school, is involved in the article, it has not adopted report-like writing and does not present teachers as objects. The study actually brings out many features of Caring. The study has interviewed the students to see if their relationship with their teachers now differs from the relationship they had with their previous teachers. With this, the students are given a voice and their opinion has been asked and secondly, the majority of students expressed positive opinions about the teachers (“I just couldn` t do it if they weren` t here. It`s such a great school”). Some comments brought out in the article include “staff treats students with respect”, “gets them know on the personal

level”, “staff were caring”, “supportive”, “encouraging and helpful”. Although individual teachers are not mentioned and teachers appear as collective ‘staff’ they are agents of positive actions. The statements are also brought out in direct quotes with neutral quoting verbs like “said” and “added”. The grammar attribute of direct quotes together with repeated positive adjectives and descriptive language pattern together to convey the teacher professional identity as relational and professional.

### **Topics only covered in the *Guardian***

The *Guardian* covers a number of topics that could not be found in *Eesti Päevaleht*. The most frequent of the topics in this group was misconduct by teachers, which was the only topic that was covered in the main section of the newspaper a number of times (21 articles altogether). Here the social language of Accountability appears in connection with teachers. The articles feature criminal offences by teachers like sex offences against pupils or disciplining pupils physically, e.g. putting sticky tape on children`s mouths to make them quiet. The sex offences can generally be divided into two: a teacher`s consensual relationship with a final year student or a teacher molesting a smaller pupil and being charged with paedophilia. It goes without saying that this set of articles, especially when published in the main part of the newspaper, sheds an immensely negative light on teacher profession. It is widely known that all sorts of criminal offences take place in society but if the person committing the crimes is somebody who is meant to be a role model, supporter and educator of children, the degree of the offence seems much greater than it would have been with a representative of any other sphere. Although the crimes are limited, because of their rarity and gravity they get extraordinary attention and thus help to shape the negative view of teachers.

As it is mentioned, *Eesti Päevaleht* did not have any articles about teachers committing crimes in Estonia.

Ofsted reports and pupils` GCSE results were the next category that primarily uses the social language of Accountability. Articles under both topics are generally structured like reports to convey statistical data about teachers, schools and students. The articles featuring GCSE results include numbers of how many people have taken the tests, the results in percentages within different subjects, schools and regions in the UK. They also present the grades that students have received, the difference between boys and girls, and compare the results with the previous years. This is an excellent example of Accountability, which only respects the knowledge that can be presented, compared and quantified in numbers. Also, when covering Ofsted reports, a lot of technical vocabulary is used (“we need to disaggregate curriculum from qualifications”, “culture of target-setting is damaging teachers` mental health”), teachers, students and even schools are the objects of institutional actions and decisions (“Ofsted telling teachers what they should be doing”; “Ofsted does not expect to see unnecessary or written dialogue between teachers and pupils in exercise books and folders”) and thus those, who are directly connected to education, are left on the background.

The remaining topics – strike and teacher training and qualifications – both impart their message in the mixture of social languages. The articles about strike generally give an overview of the progress of teachers` discontent and actions over pay, pensions and general working conditions. Some articles are outlined as reports, some resemble narratives, and some contain the features of both in one article. The social language of Accountability is present in the articles by referring to institutional authorities, e.g. a spokesman of the Department for Education and the representative of the Prime Minister are quoted in the majority of the articles and the claims that have been made are against the teachers` and the National Union of Teachers` strike plans. Although it is not in the power of the Department for Education to

prohibit the strike, they have very clearly expressed their discontentment with it. What adds to the report-like writing are the statistical features derived from the national institutions presented in the articles, e.g. the Department for Education has brought out the percentage of schools that has taken part in the strike, they have compared it to previous years` data; the number of schools closed in different regions has been brought out; different dates of negotiations and acts have been noted etc.

On the other hand, very many articles present claims by the National Union of Teachers (who represent the teachers and whose claims can be ascribed to teachers indirectly) or the teachers involved in the strike. The claims are often made in direct quotes with neutral quoting verbs like “said” or “explained”. For example an article “Teachers explain why they are on strike: “If it’s bad for us, it’s definitely bad for the kids”” is entirely devoted to stating different teachers` opinions and reasons for strike. This enables the readers to perceive teachers as individuals and let the public see why they need to be heard by the government. Additionally, very many positive and supportive words are attributed to teachers within the topic, e.g. “good”, “experienced”, “energetic”, “enthusiastic”; “teachers love teaching” etc. Most of the claims made by the National Union of Teachers and the teachers themselves try to convey the meaning that teachers are actually enthusiastic about teaching and students but they need better conditions to keep performing to their best standards.

Teacher training and qualifications is another topic where most of the articles include both social languages and very few can clearly be identified with just one and the features found are similar to those in the topic of strike. Although this set of articles presented claims by different institutions, associations and programmes, the difference from the previous topics is the fact that these institutions, e.g. School Direct programme leading to qualified teaching status, are in direct contact with teachers and teacher trainees. Thus, these institutions represent the common ground of the institutions as well as the teachers.

## Conclusion

Although teachers are the key figures in putting education policies into practice and helping the young members of society become mature and skilled adults, the image of the teaching profession has remained contradictory. One of the biggest influences on the public opinion – the media – seems to be full of stories that discuss the ridiculously low pay of teachers whose job is very demanding. What is more, the low pay is not the only aspect that is covered in the media. Blame for students' failings in exams and general low level of their knowledge is often put on teachers as well. The aim of this paper was to find out how the image of teachers is created in the media by analysing which social language, either the social language of Caring or Accountability, is more dominant in the news stories written about teachers. The paper proceeded from the understanding that the manner teachers are represented in the media influences the way teachers are perceived by the public and affects teachers' self-esteem and their general professional performance.

Although research on teacher representation in the news has been relatively limited (Shine and O'Donoghue 2013: 385), the research that has been carried out in Anglophone countries as well as in Estonia shows a tendency towards negative representation of teachers in the media (e.g. Cohen 2010; Goldstein 2011; Shine and O'Donoghue 2013; Moltsaar 2014). Teachers are represented as strongly opposing new government policies (Goldstein 2011: 559); their underperformance is failing students (Shine and O'Donoghue, 2013); and they are usually portrayed as passive participants in social events (Moltsaar, 2014). Nevertheless, all the research papers discussed in this thesis have identified some positive teacher representation as well and Hansen (2010), who carried out a longitudinal study of newspaper headlines in the UK, concluded that in the years 1991 – 2005 the image of teachers in the media changed from mainly negative to mainly positive.

Many of the research projects done in the field of teacher representation that are incorporated into this paper have used critical discourse analysis (CDA) in combination of other methods or with modifications. In addition to CDA, grounded theory, content analysis, theme development techniques, framing analysis and qualitative analysis were used. This particular paper followed the example of Cohen (2010) and used structural analysis to find out what the recurring grammar patterns that characterise news stories are. Similarly to Cohen (2010), while analysing the news stories, this paper also focussed on syntactic, lexical, stylistic and rhetorical strategies, which enabled me to find out in which social language, either the social language of Caring or the social language of Accountability, the news stories are written.

The corpus consisted of 45 news articles from *Eesti Päevaleht* and 122 news articles from the *Guardian*. The articles were incorporated into the study by headline and keyword searches (the word “õpetaja” was used with *Eesti Päevaleht* and respectively “teacher” with the *Guardian*). All opinion pieces, news articles that dealt with educational issues abroad and articles that were on a topic other than education and mentioned a teacher only once were left out. After creating the corpus, the articles were subdivided into groups. The topics that were present in both newspapers were teachers` salary, description of a teacher/teachers, violence against teachers, students` bad behaviour and underperformance and others (a group of articles that did not fit under any topics mentioned above). In addition to that, the *Guardian* featured also some topics that were not present in *Eesti Päevaleht*: misconduct by teachers, teacher training, teachers` strike, Ofsted reports and GCSE results.

Cohen`s (2010) study revealed that some articles could be clearly associated with one specific social language but in some articles traces of both social languages were present. The results of the present thesis confirmed her hypothesis about the multi-voicedness of news discourse (van Dijk, 1988 quoted in Cohen 2010: 109). This particular paper yielded similar

results – there are articles in the corpus that can be strongly characterised by one particular social language but there are also those in which both social languages are present. Articles within some topics can be characterised only by one social language but as the analysis shows, the topic of the articles does not necessarily dictate the social language. What is more, there are many articles, which involve both social languages. Analysing the group of articles that did not fit under any topics in *Eesti Päevaleht*, it becomes evident that 50% of the articles are written in the social language of Accountability, 25% in the social language of Caring and the remaining 25% have characteristics of both social languages. In the *Guardian*, the majority of articles on mixed topics are similarly written in the social language of Accountability (49%), 16% of the articles are in the social language of Caring and 35% of the articles used both social languages together.

The topics that are strongly characterised by the social language of Caring involve the description of a teacher/teachers and violence against teachers. Although *Eesti Päevaleht* does not have any teachers as single authors and there are many journalists who cover educational news, the articles still quote teachers often and teachers have co-authored one of the articles in the group. In the *Guardian*, there is one very positive example of teachers speaking about their genuine experiences and describing their professional life as it is. Different characteristic features of the social language of Caring (teachers treated as individuals, their professionalism and actions are emphasised; teachers are voiced in direct quotes; descriptive language is used; teachers are presented as the main agents in the news stories and in connection with positive words) are used in both newspapers. In addition, physical, relational and historical contexts in the grammar of Caring are brought out in the descriptions of schools, classrooms, the relations between pupils and teachers and the professional development of teachers.

The topics teachers' salary, misconduct by teachers, teachers' strike, Ofsted reports and GCSE results stand in contrast to the above. Firstly, the topics found mainly coverage for

negative reasons, e.g. teachers' pay not rising as promised; illegal relationships between teachers and pupils, poor GCSE results etc. Secondly, the language used in the articles on these topics has the characteristics of the social language of Accountability. The news articles are written like reports, teachers are not represented as the main agents in the news stories but rather as objects of national government's and local governments' decisions and actions. The institutions appear as the subjects that make the decisions and act according to them, none of the articles has featured teachers' opinions.

Mixed social languages are present in the article group of bad behaviour and underperformance of students. Nevertheless, the social language of Accountability dominates. The characteristic features of Accountability within this group are statistical features, report like writing style, comments by higher institutions or their representatives, language connected to failure and the portrayal of teachers as not coping with behavioural issues. Caring is visible in some articles with descriptive language, verbalising the claims of a teacher in direct quotes and teachers portrayed as playing an active role in solving problems at school.

In conclusion, the social language of Caring and the social language of Accountability coexist in the *Guardian* as well as in *Eesti Päevaleht*. One social language could be associated with certain topics but there are also topics as well as single articles that included both social languages. Nevertheless, most of the topics are covered in the social language of Accountability. What is more, in the article groups in both papers that are in mixed social languages, the social language of Accountability dominates. Firstly, it can be concluded that the social language of Accountability agrees more with the criteria of newsworthiness discussed in the introduction. As seen above, the articles that are written in the social language of Caring are descriptions of high-achieving teachers or teachers who have been the victims of misbehaving pupils. These profile stories are an entertaining read occasionally but a newspaper consisting mainly of these would not be in accordance with most of the

newsworthiness criteria. Hence, it can be concluded that the criteria of newsworthiness tend to prefer the social language of Accountability to Caring.

Secondly, looking at the way teachers and education is covered in the media, it can be said that it reflects the educational culture that is dominant at the moment. Educational values in Estonia as well as in Britain are based on knowledge that can be evaluated, compared and delivered in numbers. Since the educational outputs (pupils' knowledge at the end of basic and secondary school) are extremely important, there is a constant measuring of accomplishments and results that the media reports with the social language of Accountability. While covering the main issues of education, teachers and pupils are often depersonalised, left on the background and become just means of institutional decisions and requirements. The dominance of Accountability also shows that there are limited perspectives from what teachers are represented in the media. If the media included a greater variety of different perspectives from which to cover teachers as well as active teachers' voice, the social language of Caring would be accordingly represented more.

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## RESÜMEE

TARTU ÜLIKOOL

INGLISE FILOLOOGIA OSAKOND

**Kadri Varula**

**A Critical Analysis of the Representation of Teachers in the Media in Estonia and in the UK on the Example of *Eesti Päevaleht* and the *Guardian*. Õpetajate representatsioon analüüs meedias Eestis ja Ühendkuningriigis Eesti Päevalehe ja The Guardiani näitel.**

Magistritöö

2015

Lehekülgede arv: 66

Annotatsioon:

Käesoleva magistritöö eesmärgiks oli uurida, milline on hetkeseisuga õpetajate kuvand meedias Eestis ja Ühendkuningriigis Eesti Päevalehe ja The Guardiani näitel. Nii Eestis kui ka inglise keelt kõnelevates maades ei ole õpetajate kuvandit meedias ülemäära palju uuritud. Töö sissejuhatus annab ülevaate õpetaja madalast staatusest ja arutleb meedia mõjude ning mõjutamisviiside üle.

Magistritöö esimene peatükk annab ülevaate viimase kümne aasta jooksul tehtud uuringutest, mis käsitlevad õpetajate representatsiooni nii Eestis kui Ühendkuningriigis, Austraalias ja Ameerika Ühendriikides. Kuigi uuringud pärinevad erinevatest riikidest, analüüsimiseks on kasutatud erinevas suuruses ja vormis korpusi ning analüüsimeetodeid, tuleb tõdeda, et tulemused on üldiselt sarnased. Õpetajat kujutatakse meedias üldiselt negatiivses valguses ja õpetaja ise on vaid sõnaõiguse vahend hariduspoliitika elluviimiseks.

Teine peatükk selgitab meetodivalikut, milleks on kriitilisest diskursusanalüüsist tulenev strukturealne analüüs ja kirjeldab selle tagamaid. Meetod hõlmab endas süntaktilist, leksikaalset, stiililist ja retoorilist analüüsi, mille käigus on võimalik välja selgitada, kas uudisartiklid õpetajatest on kirjutatud kas hoolivas või aruandlikus sotsiaalses keeles.

Meetodile järgneb artiklite analüüs, mille käigus tuuakse välja artiklite alateemad ja sotsiaalne keel alateemade lõikes. Analüüsist selgub, et nii Eesti Päevalehes kui ja The Guardianis kasutatakse artiklites, mis räägivad õpetajatest, mõlemat sotsiaalset keelt. Siiski, tuleb tõdeda, et aruandlik sotsiaalne keel domineerib ja seega kajastatakse õpetajaid enamasti kui passiivseid hariduselu osapooli, kelle individuaalsust ei rõhutata ja kes on vaid institutsiooniliste otsuste ja tegude vahendiks.

Märksõnad: õpetajad, kuvand meedias, diskursusanalüüs, meedianalüüs.

**Lihtlitsents lõputöö reprodutseerimiseks ja lõputöö üldsusele kättesaadavaks tegemiseks**

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